

**Written Testimony of United Way for Southeastern Michigan  
Regarding 897-Imposing Medicaid Work Requirements, May 2, 2018**

**Submitted to the House Appropriations Committee by:  
Dr. Deirdre Young, Vice President, Health & Equity**



**United Way**

660 Woodward Avenue, #300  
Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Chairwoman Cox and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of United Way for Southeastern Michigan and the community we serve, I'm writing to express our grave concerns about SB 897.

While United Way supports efforts to help those with the ability to seek and find gainful employment, Medicaid is not a work program. It is a health care program—a highly successful one at that, and there is little evidence that threatening access to essential health services will assist struggling Michiganders in finding a job. In fact, reports from independent, nonpartisan organizations indicate that this proposal is more likely to hurt families by eliminating their access to health care while costing taxpayers more than it would ever save through increased bureaucratic red tape and administrative expenses.


Of the more than 2 million Michigan residents who depend on Medicaid, most are children, seniors, people with disabilities and their family members who serve as caregivers. These vulnerable individuals will be negatively impacted as complex paperwork and coverage lockouts of up to a year add new hurdles to healthcare access. While the bill rightfully includes some specific exemptions, they will be difficult to maintain on a regular basis. Increased bureaucratic red tape, narrow definitions and the challenge of obtaining medical records and other documentation will create problems for recipients, employers, healthcare providers and Medicaid offices alike.

Additionally, Medicaid recipients who lose coverage will still need health care. Without access to Medicaid, many will no longer be able to afford the care they need, leading to increased uncompensated care costs that will inevitably drive up insurance premiums for everyone in Michigan.

Ultimately, this proposal will not increase employment, improve access to health care or save taxpayer dollars. Nor will it improve the cost or quality of care for anyone in Michigan. What it will do is throw up new barriers between struggling people and the essential health services they need. Medicaid is an effective, efficient program which ensures Michigan residents can get access to the quality health care they need while safeguarding costs for all of us. Please do not support any legislation that takes the program's focus away from that mission. Please oppose SB 897.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns and for your continued service to our community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Deirdre Young

Vice President, Health and Equity